

The Library Assistant :

The Official Organ of the Library Assistants' Association.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS.

MIDLAND BRANCH.—SUMMER MEETING AT GREAT MALVERN.

A warm invitation is given to all members of the Association to the Summer Meeting at Malvern, on Thursday, 13th July. The following programme has kindly been arranged by Mr. F. C. Morgan, Librarian, Malvern Public Library :—

3 p.m. Leave Malvern Link Station and walk to top of Worcester-shire Beacon. Those not wishing to climb the hill may find their way to St. Ann's Well and there await the main party.

4.45 Visit Public Library.

5.15 Tea, by special invitation.

6.0 Visit to Davenham Gardens by kind permission of C. W. Dyson Perrins, Esq.

or,

Drive round the hills—fare 1s.

Members travelling from North of Malvern should book to Great Malvern, but alight at Malvern Link. Those coming from the south should book to Malvern Link and alight there.

Friends of members are cordially invited.

Those who intend being present should inform Mr. W. E. Owen, Coventry Public Library, not later than 10th July.

EDITORIAL.

The Next Number of "The Library Assistant" will, as in former years, be combined with the September number and issued on September 1st. We take this opportunity of wishing to all our readers a most enjoyable holiday season.

The Annual Meeting.—There was not a single hitch in the arrangement for the Annual Meeting, and to all who were present it proved to be not only an interesting event and important from the point of view of librarianship, but also

a most enjoyable social gathering. The visit to the British and Foreign Bible Society's Depot took up more time than had been anticipated on account of the general interest of the Society's establishment, so that the alternative arrangements had to be curtailed. Sion College was well worthy of the anticipatory comments in our last number. Indeed it surpassed the expectations of those who had not previously seen the College. After tea, kindly provided by the Governors, there was every opportunity to examine the library, and Mr. C. H. Limbrick's exhibition of rarities. As will be seen from the account published in this number, there was no lack of speakers at the subsequent Conference; the Annual Report was accepted unanimously; and the Special Report on conditions of library service was also accepted unanimously after a valuable discussion. Thus has concluded a year of work which, in yielding more than an ordinary amount of good to library assistants and to librarianship, has added greatly to the power of the Association. We look forward to the next session with the pleasurable anticipation of a continuance of these activities, and have every confidence in an increase in membership and in a consequent enlargement of the scope of work.

The next Sessional Programme.—The preparation of the programme for the coming session is well advanced, and there is every promise of an interesting year. But as the list of subjects for discussions is not yet full, the Council will welcome suggestions from Members as to papers to be read or as to any activity that may tend to forward the work of the Association.

The L.A.A. Library.—The Library of the Association has been enriched by a donation from Miss E. Hetherington, of Hammersmith, of volumes of "The Library," "The Library Association Record," "The Library World," "The Library Journal," and "Public Libraries," with the addition of some volumes and parts of "The Library Assistant." The best thanks of the Association are due to Miss Hetherington, because by her donation many lacunae in the sets of magazines belonging to the Library have been filled, and volumes of valuable journals such as "The Library Journal" have been added which have never before been represented.

Postal Reform.—Among other business reported in "The Work of the Council" paragraph in May, will be noticed a report from the Editor on his attendance at a meeting of Editors to discuss the question of the rates of postage on periodicals other than daily and weekly newspapers. It has

long been a cause for grievance that the charges on such printed matter by the British Post Office are excessive. It was clearly demonstrated at the meeting convened by the Editor of the "Agricultural Economist" that they are *the highest in the world*. How absurd and unequal are the charges can best be illustrated by the fact that whereas such a magazine as "The Field," which often weighs three or four pounds, can be sent for one half-penny, our own journal last month, because it weighed over two ounces, was charged one penny. It has been only with great difficulty (by using light paper, and the thinnest envelopes) that we have been able to keep the weight of the ordinary numbers within the two ounces, and the earnest wish to enlarge the scope and increase the usefulness of "The Library Assistant" cannot be satisfied because of the heavy increase in the cost of postage which would result. The meeting was a most representative one, and the unanimity of opinion on the question resulted in the passage of four vigorous resolutions condemning the attitude of the Post Office, which cripples the work of an extremely important branch of literature, demanding as fair treatment as is afforded to publishers in America, Canada, etc., and forming a Committee to carry on the work of pressing the necessity of reform. The Council of the Association wholeheartedly supports the movement, and will do all in its power to add weight to the campaign.

THE DIARY OF AN EASTER PILGRIMAGE (*continued*).

By OLIVE E. CLARKE.

Easter Day dawned clear and bright, and several members of the party rose early and made their way to a little English church, fragrant with the scent of lilies, wherein that sense of peace surrounded them which comes to those who meet with dear, familiar experiences in places where all things else are strange. The morning was devoted by some to a visit to the Hôtel de Ville, but practically the whole party attended High Mass in St. Gudule, that impressive building which appears to keep watch and ward over the city: a special choir and orchestra had been obtained for the Easter Festival services, and the music, particularly the "Gloria in Excelsis," was peculiarly beautiful. A stroll through a Parc bathed in golden sunshine followed the service; a hasty luncheon and a valiant, but unsuccessful attempt to catch an express train to Antwerp was made, however, the party invaded one which stopped at every station and gained their first

experience of third-class travelling on the Continent. A somewhat protracted journey was whiled away by inconsequent jokes, the inscribing of autographs on picture postcards, dramatic recitations, and—alas that it should have to be recorded, by one in sweet sleep. Having arrived at Antwerp, the party followed the man with the guidebook down fine wide streets to the quiet square in which stands that Mecca of book-lovers, the Musée Plantin. Time did not permit of more than a cursory glance at the treasures to be found there, but the visitors noted the portraits of the printer and his family painted by Rubens, an unknown painter's picture of "The Disciples at Emmaeus"; some delightful MSS. whose beautiful script and wonderful ornamentation bear witness to the pride taken by the scribes and illuminators in their work; some fine specimens of early printing, including a copy of the 36-line Bible and some Aldines' and Elzevirs' were also to be seen. Crossing the picturesque mediaeval courtyard, with one of its walls covered by the vine said to have been planted by Christopher Plantin, the visitors found themselves in the printing-offices: in them everything is so arranged that work could be resumed at any time; the presses, the types, and ornaments and some loose sheets of corrected proof being especially interesting.

Then, by way of quaint old streets watched over by statues of Our Blessed Lady, the party came to the Cathedral, which is the largest and finest example of Gothic architecture in the Netherlands. In addition to one or two very beautiful chapels, the Cathedral contains some of the best examples of Ruben's art, amongst them being the great "Descent from the Cross," and "The Assumption." The tower of the Cathedral, four hundred and three feet high, was next ascended; from this coin of vantage a magnificent panoramic view of the Netherlandish plain, with the Scheldt winding in and out like a huge serpent, and a bird's-eye view of Antwerp itself was obtained. Not only were the chimes heard, but the bells were also seen, and the mechanism of the great clock inspected ere the descent to earth was made. Tea was then sought at "The Rubens' Restaurant," and, owing to the fact that it was Easter Day, the proprietor gave his customers a delicious cake which was greatly appreciated. Purchases of picture postcards, and a walk back through the town completed the visit to Antwerp; a fast train was caught back to Brussels, where the party separated and went in various directions for walks, in order to study "*la vie continentale*."

In accordance with instructions received, and awakened by the sound of song, the members of the party, with but few exceptions, arose betimes on Monday to partake of an early "petit déjeuner." This last meal was not without diversion, for "Madame" presented the bill, and accounts had therefore to be settled. However, all was accomplished at last; signatures and other details were inscribed in the official visitors' register as required by Government, compliments were exchanged with "Madame," luggage was shouldered, and away went the party to the Gard du Nord to deposit the baggage in the cloak-room. The remainder of the morning was spent by some in a visit to the weird Wiertz Museum, by others in flying visits to favourite haunts, from which some of the ladies reappeared laden with boxes of cigars, and by a final lecture by Monsieur Otlet.

This last lecture was delivered in the building—a disused Chapel—in which is stored the classified collection of documents on all present-day questions. M. Otlet first drew attention to a notice of the school in the current issue of "L'Etoile Belge," and the members read the following paragraphs with considerable gusto:—

Une "Summer School" à Bruxelles.

Le "summer school," comme l'entendent les Anglo-Américains, consiste à utiliser une vacance pour faire une excursion agréable en plein air, visiter des institutions scientifiques, suivre un cours sur un sujet d'actualité et nouer des relations personnelles. Une vingtaine de bibliothécaires anglais réalisent actuellement un tel programme. Le cours a lieu à l'Institut International de Bibliographie et porte sur les méthodes bibliographiques et l'organisation de la documentation; les visites sont faites dans les musées, les bibliothèques, les bâtiments d'enseignement et les grandes monuments; l'excursion se poursuit à travers la forêt de Soignes, Tervueren, Waterloo et à Bruges, sur la route du retour *via* Ostende. Partis de Londres jeudi soir, au début des "holidays," les grands écoliers seront de nouveau à leur travail mardi matin. Les organisateurs comptent développer à l'avenir de telles visites internationales."

M. Otlet then dealt at some length with the question of Documentation. He explained that the term document was the general one used to designate all the several and official forms of records, writing, letters, figures of all kinds; in fact, all publications, ranging from the broadside to the book. It became necessary for the Institut International to collect all publications, so as to create collections of documents: it therefore makes a systematic collection of cuttings from newspapers which give contemporary information and are helpful in bibliographical research; of small pamphlets, prospectuses, etc., and of the publications of several societies. Each "document" is cut and pasted on a large card on which is given the name of the author, or source of the

article, together with its classification. These cards are stored in large trays on the same principle as those in the smaller ones: in this way a vast universal and perpetual encyclopædia is being formed. Some idea of the magnitude of this work is gained when one learns that 200,000 documents were collected within the space of three years. A photographic record of these documents is also kept, so that if perchance they were destroyed, their contents would not be lost to the world.

At the conclusion of the lecture, the President (Mr. W. C. Berwick Sayers) voiced the thanks of the party to M. Otlet for his hospitable and courteous reception, and for his kindness in delivering the lectures in English; the Chairman of the Midland Branch (Mr. H. W. Checketts) seconded this vote in a few well-chosen words, and it was carried unanimously and enthusiastically. After some final words of farewell, the party adjourned to lunch, and in the afternoon they journeyed to Bruges. A very thorough exploration of this ancient and historical town was made; visits were paid to the Cathedral, to the Grand Place with its picturesque Guildhall and the Chapel of the Holy Blood; to the quays whose old-world charm evoked great admiration, and whose canals recalled, to a certain extent, one's dreams of Venice; to the Hospice de St. Jean, within whose walls are the famous pictures by Memling, and the shrine, decorated with scenes from the legend of St. Ursula, which is said to have been painted by him in return for the kindness shewn him by the sisters; and then, at last, to "the belfry, old and brown" which has kept guard over the city for so many long years: in the deserted courtyard, the sound of the chimes rang clearly and sweetly out, calling one to linger and give the imagination free rein. But time pressed, and trains will not linger, so the way to the station was taken, and the journey to Ostende made. Ostende proved to be dreary and deserted, the streets and digue were illumined by lamps at far distant intervals, and, after dinner, there was no inducement to remain ashore, and the party embarked on board the "Princess Elisabeth." A marconigram was sent to Mr. H. Vaux Hopwood, the originator of the excursion, to tell of its success, and the coast of Belgium was left near midnight. There had been rumours of a fog in the Channel, but they were but rumours, and the moon soon rose in all her glory; the spirit of song descended upon various members, and the return home was enlivened by strains, ranging from "Who killed Cock Robin?" to extracts from the Wagnerian operas. London

was reached about 6 a.m., when, after exchanging hopes that other excursions would be possible in the future, the members scattered to all parts of the kingdom.

PROCEEDINGS.

MAY MEETING AT HAMPSTEAD.

For the first time in its existence the Association on May 10th held a meeting at Hampstead in the lecture room of the Central Library. A few Members met in the afternoon, and after a tramp over the Heath paid a visit to the Branch Libraries and then had tea together. The meeting commenced at 8 o'clock, and in taking the Chair, Mr. W. E. Doubleday extended a very cordial welcome to the L.A.A. on behalf of the Hampstead Libraries' Committee and of himself. He congratulated the Association on the way it carried out its business, emphasizing the amount it did for the assistant. After the reading of the minutes of the previous meeting, Mr. R. Cooper (Battersea) was elected a Member of Council, and Messrs B. Crook (Leyton) and J. Warner (Croydon) auditors, there being no other nominations. The Chairman called upon Mr. R. F. Bullen to read his paper on Financial Loans: Methods of Borrowing and Repayment which, with the valuable discussion that took place afterwards, in which Mr. Bursill (Woolwich), the President, Messrs. Thorne (Poplar), Stewart (Islington), Chambers (Woolwich), Purnell (Croydon), Coutts (Islington), and the Chairman took part, will be printed in "The Library Assistant" as soon as possible. Votes of thanks to Mr. Bullen, to the Chairman and to the Libraries' Committee of Hampstead, concluded an interesting meeting. The Members present were enabled, both before and after the meeting to see the working of the library.

ANNUAL MEETING, 1911.

THE SIXTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE LIBRARY ASSISTANTS' ASSOCIATION, now an event of the past, can give place to none in point of interest and importance, and formed a fitting conclusion to a Session distinguished for the amount of work accomplished towards the forwarding of the Library movement, as well as for a series of events of particular value to the library assistant. The weather was ideal; the programme was full to over-flowing, and a better meeting place could not have been chosen. If there can be any cause for regret it is that more people did not avail

themselves of the opportunity of partaking of the hospitality of Sion College and joining in discussions of the greatest import to library assistants and the library profession.

VISIT TO THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY'S DEPOT.

The proceedings started when, at three o'clock, on Wednesday, June 4th, about twenty members met to view the depot of the British and Foreign Bible Society in Queen Victoria Street. Here a warm welcome was extended to the party by the Rev. Arthur Taylor who was present to show the Society's wonderful library of about 30,000 Bibles and its various portions in more than 500 languages. In the room was an exhibition of early Bibles arranged to show the history of the version in present use. From the Library the party proceeded to the warehouse and were shown the stores ready and being prepared to be sent out into all parts of the world, including the printing presses from which are issued books in out of the way languages for which types have to be specially prepared.

MEETING AT SION COLLEGE.

There was no time left for the projected visit by the main party to Messrs. Cassell's publishing house, nor to the St. Bride Foundation Institute, the visit to the B.F.B.S. having proved so interesting as to take up all the time available, until at 5 o'clock the Members, with others who had in the meantime visited Cassell's or whose engagements had prevented from attending the previous event, met at Sion College. Here tea had been provided by the kindness of the Governors of the College, after partaking of which a visit of inspection was made to the Library in which Mr. C. H. Limbrick had prepared a most interesting exhibition of early printed books and other treasures of the College.

At 6.30 p.m. the REV. J. F. MARR, Vicar of St. Botolph, Aldgate, E.C., President of the Court of Governors of the College, took the Chair in the Hall, in which had gathered about sixty members and friends. In opening the proceedings he said it gave him very great pleasure indeed to preside over a gathering of librarians in the College to which had been attached a library for about 300 years, and on behalf of the Court of Governors he welcomed the Association to Sion College. In describing the institution in which for the first time he was taking his place as President, he said that though not part of the original scheme of the founder, Dr. White, a library had been found a necessity and was very soon added. Like all institutions with so

lengthy a history, the College had suffered from the Great Fire, and a large number of books were destroyed. In the rebuilding the library became the most important feature for consideration. The College was primarily for the Clergy and the library was accordingly built up with special regard to their needs, but books were also added very largely in general subjects, history and literature. Formerly it was one of the libraries in receipt of books under the Copyright Act; but this has been changed into a Treasury grant of £365 per annum. The speaker then referred to the centenary of George Wallace whose advocacy of free libraries did so much towards their foundation, and to the bi-centenary of the publication of "The Spectator," in which he had lately come across an attempt by Addison at the compilation of a list of "Best Books" specially suitable for a lady's library. As there were ladies as well as gentleman present, he read a portion of the article to show what sort of books were prevalent at the time, and as a reminder of the swift mortality of famous writers. He concluded his remarks with a hope that the conference would prove fruitful.

CONFERENCE.

The Chairman then called on MR. W. BENSON THORNE (Poplar) to open the Conference with a paper on "The Policy of the Library Assistants' Association in Its Relation to the Public Library Movement." Mr. Thorne dwelt particularly on the need for enthusiasm in carrying forward the work of the Association. It was recognised that Libraries were engaged in a great work. By uniting together it was possible for Assistants to help greatly in forwarding their objects. Recent events such as the advertisements for librarians at ridiculously low salaries were apt to be discouraging, but the L.A.A. was doing everything possible towards putting a stop to such insults to the profession, by obtaining publicity in the districts concerned, by writing to the respective library authorities, and by similar means. By enthusiastic work library assistants could, through the Association, do an immense amount of work in obtaining the recognition due to libraries. MR. W. E. OWEN, who had come specially from Coventry for the Meeting, followed with a paper on "The Policy of the L.A.A. in Its Relation to the Individual Assistant." He showed how, as in the example of the Midland Branch, assistants could obtain from their Association abundance of good both in the advantages obtainable from the

discussions of professional matters, and in gaining for themselves education in professional subjects. The more widely the Association could operate the better would be the results. He urged the arrangement of Meetings, if possible on one of the Bank Holidays in each year, at centres most convenient for members all over England, so that, by reason of the libraries being closed and the cheapness of fares at such times, the largest number could attend. MR. J. D. STEWART (Islington) in opening the discussion, welcomed Mr. Owen to London. He thought Mr. Thorne had been rather pessimistic in his references to examples of library parsimony ; such cases as those boroughs in which libraries had not yet been established, left room for progress. Mr. Owen had contrasted the conditions in the Provinces with those in London ; but it was a difficulty which was met with in every Association. There must be a headquarters, and London was naturally the head and must be the best centre for educational facilities. Such questions had been brought up in the Report to be presented later, in which it was pointed out how, by the co-operation of librarians and principal assistants, educational facilities could be provided in any districts. With reference to the proposition that the Association should take action in cases of grievance against the Library Association registration decisions, he considered it to be possible only after the individual Assistant has taken every step towards proving his case. He thought that if the Association tried to do too much, there was a danger of getting little accomplished. The Association had great influence throughout the country and they should work through their members in the country. MR. R. A. PEDDIE thought Mr. Thorne's paper was most interesting and stimulating and an apt expression of the enthusiasm that he had urged. He believed that more attention should be paid to specializing in the different departments of library work. In America a man could start in a small library and develop on certain lines, say in cataloguing or classification. From this he could go to another library taking up his special work, and ultimately gain a headship of a department in one of the great libraries. He would like to see a similar arrangement in England. They must convince library authorities that better service will be obtainable from men who are properly trained. He agreed with Mr. Thorne that they needed enthusiasm and believed that the Council of the Association were enthusiastic. But the spirit must extend throughout the whole of the Members. MR. J. F. HOGG (Battersea)

thought that more enthusiasm was needed in the Library Association to get them to take action in such cases as had been pointed out. It would be well also if Library Committees could be made to take more interest in the work of their libraries. The work required of assistants was of a very high order and yet they were paid worse than street sweepers. He thought it would be a good thing if libraries were to be placed under the educational authority. MR. H. R. PETERS expressed his belief in the value of meetings in the provinces, and hoped they would become more frequent. The HON. EDITOR (Mr. H. R. Purnell) moved and Miss O. E. CLARKE, (Islington) seconded a vote of thanks to the readers of the papers which was carried enthusiastically. In reply, MR. W. E. OWEN said he agreed with Mr. Stewart that London should be the centre, but thought more attention should be paid to the Branches. There were difficulties in the Provinces which did not exist for the London assistant, such as the lack of opportunities for meeting together. Until the Midland Branch was formed the Northampton library had not been visited by an association for over 40 years. Many assistants would lose interest because of these difficulties. With regard to registration he had heard it said that there were cases in which provincial assistants had not been treated the same as those in London. The L.A.A. had a duty to perform to those assistants. THE PRESIDENT (Mr. W. C. Berwick Sayers) then moved a vote of thanks to the Rev. J. F. Marr for presiding, to the Court of Governors for their reception and hospitality, and to the Sub-Librarian for his trouble in arranging the exhibition. THE HONORARY SECRETARY (Mr. H. T. Coutts) seconded, and the vote was carried unanimously with applause. The Chairman replied in a few well chosen words, in which he expressed his pleasure and interest in the debate.

BUSINESS MEETING.

Shortly after 8 o'clock the President took the Chair, and, after the reading of the Minutes of the previous meeting, called upon the HONORARY SECRETARY to move the Sixteenth Annual Report. In doing so Mr. Coutts drew attention to the increase in income in spite of a slight falling off in membership, and said that there was need for missionary work on the part of members to gain increased support for the Association. Sometimes members had left the Association, because the Council did not take particular lines of action. That was not the way to improve matters. It rested with anyone who wished reform in any matter to

try and get it carried out. He referred to the new feature in the report which concerned the recently established Continental meeting, and said he hoped it was only the beginning of many such meetings. Mr. W. BENSON THORNE seconded the Report, and putting it to the Meeting the PRESIDENT remarked on the recent success of Mr. G. A. Stephen in being appointed City Librarian of Norwich, and on behalf of the Conference offered him heartiest congratulations. The Report was thereupon adopted unanimously without further discussion.

THE PRESIDENT then moved the adoption of the "Report on the Hours, Salaries, Training, etc., of assistants in British Municipal Libraries," and in support of it outlined the history of its inception and the way it had been carried out. He pointed out the importance to the library profession of the Report, and said that with the conclusion of compilation it was not to be thought that the Council's work had ended. Much remained to be done and the Report could not be regarded as complete until details had been obtained of the working of libraries other than those under Municipal control. Mr. J. D. STEWART seconded the adoption of the Special Report. In reply to a question from Mr. Owen the President said that in cases where house, etc., were provided for chief librarians £50 had been added to the salaries. Mr. Owen then continued the discussion by remarking on the section relating to time sheets. He did not think they were so easily adjustable as was suggested, especially where a lot of back work had to be done. At Coventry he thought it would be impossible to do the work on the time sheet suggested. Mr. H. G. SURETIES did not think Coventry was an isolated case. It was largely a matter of L.S.D. They were all looking forward to the Report to mitigate many of the evils in the library profession. THE HONORARY EDITOR (Mr. H. R. Purnell) said that the great value of the Report lay in its suggestiveness. Probably there were few, if any, libraries in which the recommendations could be adopted as a whole; but every library could find a basis for alteration. In the matter of time sheets, although it had formerly been thought impossible at Croydon with the present staff to effect alteration, a careful consideration involving much thought and even several headaches had shown that a revision was practicable, and a time sheet had been in working order for more than a year which resembled in many respects the one in the report. The benefit to the staff had been enormous. The suggested time sheet was not to give hard and fast rules, but to provide suggestions. One value of the enquiry had

shown itself in the fact that already some Libraries, without doubt awakened by the receipt of the form, had begun some changes. He then drew a picture of an assistant studying the report, making recommendations to his chief and the latter bringing the recommendations before the Committee. Mr. H. W. POULTER (Walthamstow) said the working of a time sheet depended very much on the planning of the building. If there were several departments on different floors the supervision was difficult. Mr. G. V. HAYWARD (Watford) moved the deletion of Appendix II. from the proposed reprint of the report in view of the danger of Library Committees adopting the low scale as a basis of payment of salaries. Mr. H. W. Poulter seconded, but after the discussion by Messrs. Thorne, Hawkins, Peters and Purnell, the motion was lost. The Special Report was then adopted unanimously.

RESULT OF THE BALLOT.

The Honorary Secretary next announced the result of the Ballot for Council as follows:—

President:

W. C. Berwick Sayers, Croydon.

Vice-President:

Joseph Walton, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Honorary Treasurer:

W. Geo. Chambers, Plumstead, Woolwich.

Honorary Secretary:

Henry T. Coutts, North Islington.

Fellows:

William A. Peplow, Wood Green.

Hugh Smith, Bishopsgate Institute.

London Representatives:

J. D. Stewart, Islington	... 143
W. B. Thorne, Poplar	... 139
J. D. Young, Greenwich	... 128
Miss O. E. Clarke, Islington	... 122
W. G. Hawkins, Fulham	... 116
G. R. Bolton, Stoke Newington	... 111
J. F. Hogg, Battersea	... 101
R. F. Bullen, Poplar	... 98
H. R. Peters, Lewisham	... 95
R. Cooper, Battersea	... 93

Non-London Representatives:

G. W. Strother, Leeds	... 125
H. R. Purnell, Croydon	... 118
W. E. Owen, Coventry	... 113
H. W. Checketts, Birmingham University	... 104
R. Wright, Sunderland	... 92
T. M. Coulson, Belfast	... 90
W. Morgan, Cardiff	... 84
J. Ross, Liverpool	... 84
J. C. Handby, Bradford	... 75
H. G. Sureties, Hornsey	... 74

Not Elected:

Miss H. A. Funnell, Hampstead 83

W. Law, Brighton	... 73
O. J. Sutton, Manchester	... 71
W. Wilson, Gateshead	... 69
H. W. Poulter, Walthamstow	55
C. F. Tessier, Walthamstow	50

Chas. Blackmore
G. V. R. Hayward
O. W. Stone
W. H. Sunley

} Scrutineers.

THE PRESIDENT having declared the Officers and Council duly elected, MR. C. H. PEACH (Gray's Inn) moved, and MR. B. E. SUMNER (Hampstead) seconded, a vote of thanks to the retiring Officers and Council, which was carried. The President's reply on their behalf concluded the meeting at 10.15 p.m.

MIDLAND BRANCH.

A meeting was held at Northampton on Thursday, April 6th. The visitors were met at the Castle Station shortly after two, and were taken to inspect Queen Eleanor's Cross, the history of which was explained by Mr. George. They proceeded to the Town Hall, where, in the Council Chamber, the Association were the honoured guests of the Mayor and Mayoress (Mr. and Mrs. S. Yarde), to tea.

Those present besides the Mayor and Mayoress included Alderman John Brown, Mr. T. J. George (Librarian), Mr. Reginald Brown (Sub-Librarian), Mr. W. E. Owen, of Coventry (Hon. Secretary of the Association), and members from Birmingham, Kettering, Northampton, Rushden, and other towns.

Mr. T. J. George, in proposing thanks to the Mayor, said that was the first time any Library Association had visited Northampton, and it was his desire to make the occasion a memorable one. The Mayor, in responding, said he was happy to extend to them a welcome to Northampton. He was very proud of the Library and its staff. They would agree that the building was one of the best in the Midlands. It was true they wanted more books, but they had to "cut their clothes according to their cloth." He wished to say a word as to the books which ought to be thrown out of Libraries. Those suggestive books, which were only written for people of depraved taste, deserved to be publicly burned. That kind of book ought never to be provided by public authorities; if people were anxious for them they should buy them for themselves. Another point was the letting out of books to people who returned them in a filthy condition. He had seen plenty of books in Northampton which were not fit to go into a decent house. They were read by people while dressing their hair, and were found to be full of hair and hairpins; and at meal times. More assistance should be provided in the Library so that the books could be inspected when returned, and the people who dirtied them be made to pay for new ones. In concluding, Mr. Yarde trusted that the Library Assistants' Association would visit Northampton again in the future.

At six o'clock the members adjourned to the New Library, Abington Street, which was thoroughly inspected. A meeting of the Association followed, Mr. H. Grindle, of Birmingham, presiding. Mr. Hunt, Mr. Owen, and the Chairman aptly voiced the thanks of the visitors to Mr. George for the most excellent and kind arrangements he had made for their visit.

Mr. George then gave a talk on "The History and Inception of the Library Movement in Northampton." At the outset the speaker said the Library Act was adopted in Northampton in 1860, but the rate only brought in £200, which was insufficient, and a start was not actually made until 1865. The Museum was then adopted, and the first Museum was opened in 1865, and held in the upper and lower assembly-rooms of the building, formerly the old Gaol in Guildhall Road. The penny rate was then used for this as well as the Library. The Museum and Library were at once a great success, and in 1867 Mr. Taylor was appointed keeper at £75 a year. In 1876, said Mr. George, the lower Museum was given up for a Reading Room, but it was found to be too small, and the Council were compelled to make structural alterations. It was in 1882 that he took over the position of

Curator and Librarian. The Library was then so badly arranged that in giving out 60 books on Theology the assistants had to walk three miles. In 1882 they lent 46,000 books, and in 1906 230,000, while he expected during the present year the number would not fall short of 270,000. Mr. Owen, in thanking Mr. George for his address, said the history of Libraries all over the country, and particularly of Northampton Library, was very interesting, but it was a great shame that they should have to exist on a penny rate.

Mr. Reginald Brown followed with a paper on "How to Enhance the Usefulness of Public Libraries." The first necessity, he said, was to get a good collection of books and to study the requirements of a particular town, and obtain everything useful upon that subject. Books should be in the Libraries which led up to the more technical volumes, and be in the order required by the student. Fiction, he said, might be educational as well as recreative, but how many people read fiction as a study? Mr. Brown spoke of the difficulty of selecting the right books, and said he would like to see an advisory committee formed to assist the librarian in his task. Many other useful suggestions were advanced by Mr. Brown. Miss Parnell next spoke on the subject of scholars and the facilities they had for book study. Each speaker was cordially thanked at the close.

YORKSHIRE BRANCH.

The usual bi-monthly meeting of the Yorkshire Branch was held in the Art Gallery, Huddersfield, on May 11th, by the kind invitation of the Huddersfield Library Committee. The President of the Branch, Mr. J. C. Handby, occupied the chair. The social feature of the proceedings was the hospitality of His Worship the Mayor of Huddersfield (Councillor Thomson, Chairman of the Library Committee), who entertained the members to tea. Councillor Thomson extended a similar welcome on the occasion of a former visit, and members have reason to be very grateful for his keen interest in the Library Movement, and in the welfare of the assistant librarian.

The meeting was divided into afternoon and evening sessions, the afternoon being occupied by a paper from Mr. Norman Treiving (Leeds) entitled, "The Staff and the Reader: Some Suggestions." He said he believed the object of the library was to provide a liberal education for the people. There were three factors in a library: the readers, the stock, and the staff, and he was almost induced to add the greatest of those was the staff. The reader was often ignorant of the contents of the library, and his ideas of what he wanted were often ill-defined, and he was at a loss as to how to satisfy himself. Even in fiction a reader often failed to obtain what he wanted, and in other classes of books that occurred more frequently. The staff should bridge the gulf between the stock and the readers. The staff should be the readers' aid. That might appear to be an obvious sort of statement, but, when one considered the lack of interest which some assistants put into their work, and how they handed out books as though the books were metal polish, they would admit there was a good ground for making it. To be of aid to the reader, the staff should know what the books in the library were like. He did not mean that the assistant should aim at having a knowledge of every book; that would be impossible. It was possible, however, for the assistant to acquire an amount of knowledge which, without being exhaustive, would be of considerable practical value. Books of the non-fiction class generally possessed decided characteristics which, with a little trouble and attention, the assistant would be able to recognise without having read the book through. With that knowledge they would know what to offer a reader. A little knowledge, far from being a danger to an assistant, was of great value. Within a few years a mass of information could be obtained which would be of great practical use. A little knowledge of ten different branches of learning was of more use than a deep knowledge of one subject. The staff should have patience and courtesy.

It should be friendly with the readers, but not too friendly. While they were public servants they were not public slaves, and offenders would have to have that brought home to them.

MR. PROCTOR commenced the discussion and recommended assistants to take the subject of the paper seriously to heart. He thought that if assistants would make of their library's catalogue a kind of text-book, if they would go through it intelligently noting the various subject-headings and their scope, they would be able to relieve heads of departments of much unnecessary interruption, and be able to guide the reader by immediate personal knowledge. Incidentally by gaining a knowledge of books they would also be fitting themselves for future work as chiefs. MR. HAWKES said that following on the lines of Mr. Treliving's paper, a small library could be made to do a handsome work. He pointed out that the smaller the library, proportionally larger was the section generally labelled "Miscellaneous," and here a mass of "wanted" information was hidden away. He strongly urged assistants to get a thorough knowledge of this section of their library; if they did that, few would be the people who went their way unsatisfied. Unfortunately, the open-access system and classified libraries were not gaining ground so fast as it might have been hoped, for under this system, the assistant, by coming into closer touch with the books, generally gained a better knowledge of the resources at his disposal. MR. STROTHER said that the public had yet to learn that assistants were there for any other purpose than to "give out books." It rested with the assistant to dispel this idea, and by making themselves intimate with the books, and seizing all opportunities of rendering an account of their knowledge to the borrower, they would go a long way towards it. MR. JARRETT generally supported what had been said, especially with regard to open-access, as experience had forced it upon him that the assistant in such a library took a more lively interest in his work, whilst the indicator assistant tended to exhibit somewhat the mechanical attributes of the instrument under his charge. MR. HANDBY agreed that the public took first place in the library. No matter what duties a chief librarian gave an assistant they should come second to helping the borrower. As to acquaintances, it was a very bad plan for assistants to make friends over the counter. If they did so, they perhaps allowed some little privileges, which, if they did, would tend to grow until a blank refusal created an enemy for the assistant instead of a friend.

At the evening meeting, MR. ARTHUR J. HAWKES delivered a lecture on the application of Dewey to open-access libraries, with "Some suggestions towards a Constructive Revision of the Dewey Classification." Mr. Hawkes confined himself to the sections 800 and 900 as exhibiting the most pressing need of reform. By the aid of a blackboard, he showed how the usual lending library sections of "Literature" (*i.e.*, the literature of Literature), Poetry, Fiction, Essays, etc., would be set up as independent sections, yet the beauty of the Dewey notation be preserved. In regard to History and Travel, Mr. Hawkes was for "One country, one place," and suggested arriving at the desired classification by the introduction of a double notation. The scheme aroused considerable interest, a number of flattering observations being passed upon it by members present; Mr. Hawkes hopes to prepare the whole scheme for publication shortly. After a series of questions and a brief discussion, a very successful meeting was brought to a close with the usual votes of thanks.

MODERN PRICES AND ANCIENT LIBRARIES.*

The connexion between these two subjects is, as far as this notice is concerned, accidental. And yet there is a

*GIBSON, STRICKLAND. *Oxford Libraries. In Book-Auction Records*, Vol. 8, Pt. 1 pp. i-xix. Karslake and Co., Hampstead.

connexion—and generally a distressing one—between the two, for what old library is there, no matter how small, that does not contain a sufficient number of rare books to make its Librarian long for more? Time after time he is out-bidden by wealthy buyers of books, and as he scans the pages of “Book-Auction Records,” he sighs for the days when he might have bought his desirable *lacunae* at prices within his means. This useful work has now reached its eighth volume, the first part of which contains an article by Mr. Strickland Gibson on Oxford Libraries. This is the accidental connexion between book prices and old libraries. The earlier volumes contain portraits and other plates, which serve to break the monotony of page after page of book entries, while volume 7, in addition, contains articles on the libraries of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Lincolnshire, etc. Another feature of the work is the inclusion of a list of second-hand booksellers’ catalogues, which cannot fail to be of service to librarians, especially as it enumerates the main features of each. The treatment strikes one as being somewhat unequal, too much space being allotted to some second-rate catalogues at the expense of better ones. These, however, are matters of secondary importance. The object of the work is to give the record of all the prices which books sold at auction have realised during the year. In this it differs from “Book Prices Current,” which only records amounts of £1 and upwards. The librarian is often at a loss to estimate the value of the more ordinary books, and here he will get much assistance. At the same time he must take care, for many are the causes which may have affected the price of any particular book. For instance, a reader has borrowed the 21 volumes (if that be allowed) of La Harpe’s “Hist des Voyages.” He loses them (if that be possible) and the librarian wishes to charge him for the same. He turns the work up in Book-Auction Records and finds that a copy was sold for 2s.! He will probably find it difficult to pick up a copy at that price and had better multiply the amount considerably in his charge for replacement.

Mr. Karlake could not have chosen a better man to write a brief account of Oxford libraries. With his affections deeply rooted in the walls of Bodley’s Library, Mr. Gibson’s description could not be other than enthusiastic, while his extensive knowledge of all its traditions makes him an unfailing guide. The story of the vicissitudes of the University Library is an interesting one, and not least during the centuries that preceded the munificent gifts of

Sir Thomas Bodley. Librarians of newer libraries pining for greater things can take courage from the story of the beginning of a great institution, while assistant librarians, groaning on account of the smallness of their salaries, may take what comfort they can from the fact that in 1412 the University librarian received £5 a year, for which, in addition to his library duties, he had to say masses for the souls of benefactors. If modern readers were made to take the oath which was required in the 15th century, they might perhaps treat the books in a more worthy manner. "You shall swear . . . to treat in a reasonable and quiet manner, all the books . . . and to injure no book maliciously by erasing, or by detaching sections and leaves." If Mr. Gibson had also given the curse which is inscribed in some old MSS. against any who should steal the book, the dishonest reader might even be frightened into straight ways. Sir Thomas Bodley would have made a fine librarian, and his interest in, and care for the smallest details in the fitting up and organisation of the library which was to be called after his own name is extraordinary.

The college libraries also have much interest for librarians, and the photograph alone of Merton College Library—the oldest existing library in England—is enough to make one journey to Oxford to see the original. Mr. Gibson, in the short space at his command, has provided much to entertain and instruct, and if librarians do not wish to buy the back volumes of this useful "tool," they cannot do better than begin with volume 8. The article concludes with a most valuable bibliography of the subject.

C. J. P.

THE HOME UNIVERSITY LIBRARY. Volumes 1-10. Williams and Norgate. One Shilling net each.

There is ample room for such a series as is being produced by the enterprise of Messrs. Williams and Norgate. In the present state of knowledge it is often difficult to know how to begin the study of any particular subject, on account of the vast amount of literature that has grown up around almost every topic. The aim in each of these handy volumes is to present the broad outlines of knowledge in its various departments in order to provide the necessary starting point. They are intended to be not so much comprehensive as suggestive and stimulating. The ten volumes before us, the first of a hundred or more that are projected, show, by the diversity of the subjects dealt with, and the treatment of each, how valuable will be the set when completed. It is not claiming too much to say that the series is providing a long felt want. Under the editorship of Herbert Fisher, the historian, and Professors Gilbert Murray and J. Arthur Thomson, the books so worthily introduced will be likely to justify the name given to the series. To librarians, whose knowledge is supposed to be

encyclopaedic they will be a most useful asset, and their value is increased by the provision of annotated, and in some cases classified bibliographies.

To library assistants the volumes dealing with English Literature will be most valuable, as aids in preparing for the Library Association examination. The first volume under this head is John Masefield's "William Shakespeare," which contains introductory chapters on the life of Shakespeare and the theatre of his day, followed by a treatment of the plays. This takes the form in each case of an outline of the plot and a critical note on the source, structure, etc. If the work has suffered from the author's attempt to do too much in the space at his disposal, and thus curtailed the critical portion, it will none the less provide a suggestive basis for the study of Shakespeare. It is impossible in the space at our disposal to do more than mention the separate works that make up this series. One of the best is M. I. Newbiggin's "Modern Geography." In connection with it may be mentioned W. S. Bruce's "Polar Exploration," which is largely based on the author's personal experience. Hilaire Belloc's "The French Revolution" might have been made more interesting, but is a valuable introduction to the subject. "A Short History of War and Peace" has long been a desideratum, and is here ably done by G. H. Perris. Other works are Mrs. J. R. Green's "Irish Nationality"; Sir C. P. Ilbert's "Parliament"; J. R. Macdonald's "The Socialist Movement"; and F. W. Hirst's "The Stock Exchange." In the department of science D. H. Scott's "The Evolution of Plants" is the first published.

These are the first ten volumes, and already ten others have been published, including works on Liberalism; Health and Disease; Mathematics; Evolution; Mediaeval Europe, etc. A further ten are promised for the autumn publishing season, including one on Modern English Literature, which will be invaluable to L. A. students.

P.

NOTABLE PROFESSIONAL LITERATURE.

ENGLISH CATALOGUE OF BOOKS, 1910. 327 pp. 6½ × 10-in.
1911. Sampson Low. 6s. net.

Once again we are indebted to Messrs. Sampson Low for their prompt publication of this invaluable annual. No doubt many librarians heave a sigh of relief each March as they receive their "English Catalogue," and feel thankful that, for a time at least, they will not be under the necessity of submitting to the bookseller's frequent reply of "Cannot trace." The number of books recorded as published during 1910 is 10,804, an increase of 79 as compared with the figures for 1909. The year's output includes 8,468 New Books and 2,336 New Editions. The largest class increase on the previous year's figures is in Poetry and Drama—115 volumes. Another increase is in the class of Voyages and Travels, 71 volumes. Wonderful to relate, there were 48 volumes less of Fiction published last year than in 1909. Other classes showing decreases were History and Biography, 53; Year Books, etc., 29; Belles Lettres, 32; and Miscellaneous (pamphlets, etc.), 190. The analytical table of statistics is given in the usual form. Commencing with 1911, however, the statistics of book production will be tabulated according to a scheme adopted by the International Conference of Librarians at Brussels in August, 1910.

J.W.

LIST OF MEMBERS. ERRATA.

The name of Mr. G. F. Vale, of Stepney, was inadvertently omitted from the list of members published last month, and that of Miss A. C. M. Richmond, a member, was erroneously included in the list of associates.

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of "The Library Assistant."

DEAR SIR,

In view of your note, in the April issue of *The Library Assistant*, upon the prospective reprint in facsimile of the Mazarin Bible by M. H. Welter, of Paris, the following notice from *The Times* of Monday, 17 April, 1911, may prove interesting:—

"Facsimiles of the Mazarin Bible.—On October 14, 1910, it was announced in *The Times* that two rival editions of the famous Mazarin Bible were projected, one by M. H. Welter, the Paris bookseller, and the other by the Insel-Verlag, Leipzig. The rivalry was exceedingly unfortunate, and had it been carried to the bitter end probably both schemes would have been financial failures. A correspondent now writes pointing out that, from a notice in the *Börsenblatt*, and in consequence of the intermediary of Herr Nauhardt, an arrangement has been concluded between the rival firms. M. Welter has abandoned his intention of publishing a facsimile of the 42-line Gutenberg or Mazarin Bible, and has transferred the subscriptions already obtained by him to the Insel-Verlag, which will carry out the work as already planned. M. Welter, in announcing to his subscribers the above arrangement, points out that the Insel-Verlag have agreed not to interfere with a proposal he has in view to publish the so called 36-line Bible of Gutenberg. He is, however, not to issue this second work earlier than one year after the completion of the German facsimile, nor is any public announcement of the same to be made until six months after that date. M. Welter also states that he has the intention of publishing, in conjunction with a German firm, a facsimile of the *Psalterium Latinum* of 1457."

There are good facsimile pages both of the Gutenberg Bible and Fust and Schoeffer's *Psalter* of 1457 in Humphrey's *History of the Art of Printing*, a work worthy of perusal by all students of the early history of printing, and especially interesting on account of its numerous (100) photo-lithographic facsimiles.

Literary and Scientific Institution,
Saffron Walden.

Yours, etc.,
THOMAS WM. HUCK.

 APPOINTMENTS AND CHANGES.

ARUNDEL, MISS E. D., has been appointed Librarian of the L.C.C. Education Office Library.

BARRY, MR. JAMES, Senior Assistant, Capel Street Library, Dublin, has been appointed Librarian of the Brunswick Street Library.

DYSON, MR. A. W., Assistant, Bromley House Library, Nottingham, has been appointed Librarian of the People's Hall Library, Nottingham.

GADNEY, MISS MARGARET S., has been appointed assistant in the Leeds University Library.

ROY, MR. JOHN., Librarian of the Bridgetown District Library, Glasgow, formerly Senior Assistant in the Belfast Public Library, has been appointed Librarian of the Rathmines and Rathgar Public Library, Co. Dublin.

*STEPHEN, MR. GEORGE A., City Librarian of Norwich, lately Chief Assistant in the St. Pancras Public Libraries, has been awarded a Silver Medal by the Council of the Royal Society of Arts for the illustrated paper on "Modern Machine Bookbinding," which he read before the Society in February last. The presentation of the medal will take place at the opening meeting of the session in November next.

*Member, L.A.A.